
Le Opere di Dante: Testo critico della Società Dantesca Italiana by Dante; M. Barbi; E. G. Parodi; F. Pellegrini; E. Pistelli; P. Rajna; E. Rostagno; G. Vandelli; Il Fiore e il Detto d'Amore by E. G. Parodi

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Le Opere di Dante: testo critico della Società Dantesca Italiana. A cura di M. BARBI, E. G. PARODI, F. PELLEGRINI, E. PISTELLI, P. RAJNA, E. ROSTAGNO, G. VANDELLI. Con indice analitico dei nomi e delle cose di MARIO CASELLA e tre tavole fuor di testo. Florence: Bemporad. 1921. xxxi + 980 pp. 36 lire.

Il Fiore e il Detto d'Amore. A cura di E. G. PARODI. Con note al testo, glossario e indici. In appendice a le Opere di Dante edita dalla Società Dantesca Italiana. Same publishers. 1922. xx + 174 pp. 16 lire.

The beautiful sexcentenary Dante, the most permanent literary monument of the celebrations of last year, is the first attempt at a critical text of his complete works. It is the summary of the labour and researches, extending over a number of years, of the distinguished scholars whose names appear on the title-page. Michele Barbi, who has acted as a kind of general editor, impresses upon us in the preface that this is not the critical edition of the works of Dante which we are still to expect, the 'National Edition' which will include the critical apparatus that will enable the specialist to follow and appreciate the reasons that have led the editors to their conclusions; it is rather to be regarded as a reproduction in advance of the text that will form the basis of the National Edition. Therefore in the title they speak of 'testo critico,' but do not employ the more comprehensive phrase, 'edizione critica.' The purpose of the Società Dantesca Italiana was simply, on the great occasion of the sixth centenary, to present the student with a complete text of Dante's works as near to what we may believe the divine poet to have written as the ripest Italian scholarship could make it. It will, of course, be remembered that in no case have we an autograph manuscript of Dante's own; nor even any manuscript—save, possibly, for one canzone¹—which, by the wildest flight of imagination, can be regarded as directly derived from an autograph. The number of MSS. varies according to the work, but—whether many or few—they are for the most part relatively late and incorrect. There are even instances—the sonnets to Dante da Maiano and the *Questio de Aqua et Terra*—in which no MSS. are known to exist. Thus the task of establishing or restoring what Barbi calls 'le vere sembianze' of the works of Dante is a colossal one.

With respect to the language, the Latin works are presented throughout, rigidly and consistently, according to mediaeval orthography. In the case of the works in Italian, the editors have allowed themselves more liberty, and have adopted a compromise between the customary modernisation of the text and a complete reproduction of the mediaeval spelling, while preserving intact the words and grammatical forms and representation of sounds proper to Dante's time. The apparent inconsistencies are, no doubt, intentional, as reflecting the still unsettled condition of the vernacular in the fourteenth century, and the whole

¹ The canzone, *Donne ch' avete intelletto d'amore*, in the Cod. Vat. 3793.

result is unquestionably satisfactory. Parodi (in an article contributed last year to the *Marzocco*) wittily remarked that, in thus contributing to a great manifestation of *italianità*, 'la piccola anima filologica si sarebbe quasi, contro natura, fatta grande.'

We already possessed an almost ideal critical edition of the *Vita Nuova* by Michele Barbi, published in 1907. Here there was very little left to do. Barbi has slightly modified the orthography and punctuation of his text, and introduced one or two unimportant fresh readings, but the work remains essentially the same. The case is far otherwise with the *Rime* (the now happily discarded title of *Canzoniere* does not seem to have been applied to the collected lyrics of Dante or Petrarch until the nineteenth century). No complete or adequate edition of these wonderful poems has hitherto been produced, and Barbi's own preparatory researches have been for many years the student's chief guide. His treatment of them in the present volume is thus an event of the first importance in the field of Dante scholarship. Of the lyrics given in the Oxford Dante, he excludes absolutely four canzoni (including two sestine) which have long been known to students as spurious, twelve sonnets and four ballate, while relegating one canzone, three sonnets, and two ballate to the appendix as doubtful. On the other hand, he adds to the authentic poems one canzone, one ballata, one stanza, seventeen sonnets, and to the doubtful pieces one ballata and nineteen sonnets. We have thus—in addition to the lyrics of the *Vita Nuova* and the three canzoni of the *Convivio*—a canon of thirteen canzoni, thirty-four sonnets, five ballate, and two stanzas, with an appendix of 'rime dubbie' made up of one canzone (the trilingual canzone), three ballate, and twenty-two sonnets. We shall have to await the 'National Edition' to appreciate Barbi's reasons for acceptance or rejection, and he claims no absolute security for all the compositions included among the 'rime genuine.' Our own comparatively limited knowledge of the MSS. would have led us to place some of the latter among the doubtful lyrics, and to have included in the same class the sonnet, *E' non è legno di sì forti nocchi* (here rejected as probably by Cino da Pistoia). The arrangement of the *Rime* is broadly chronological (with subsidiary groupings according to subject matter), the final series of 'rime varie del tempo dell' esilio' being closed by the 'Lisetta' sonnet: *Per quella via che la bellezza corre*. Barbi has already shown weighty reasons why this sonnet—formerly regarded as connected with the 'donna gentile' group of the *Vita Nuova*—should be assigned to this later epoch¹. We are tempted to think that he unduly restricts the number of 'rime allegoriche e dottrinali.' The splendid canzoni, *Amor che movi tua virtù dal cielo* and *Io sento sì d' amor la gran possanza*, seem to us to belong to this class. In the former the wonderful lines on the imagination (31–38), which invite comparison with *Purg.* xvii, 13–18 and *Par.* x, 40–48, and in the latter the tone of the two tornate, point to the poems being philosophical or allegorical, which is perhaps confirmed by the position assigned to them, immediately after the

¹ *La questione di Lisetta*, in *Studi danteschi*, I, pp. 61–63.

canzoni of the *Convivio*, by Boccaccio in his arrangement of the series. The critical reconstruction of the text of the *Rime* is a problem hardly less complicated than that of the establishment of a canon of authenticity. There are a few instances in which Barbi has surprised us by maintaining the hitherto accepted readings rather than adopting the more tempting variants offered by the MSS., but here too we must await his promised justification. Unquestionably this 'testo critico' of the *Rime* fulfils most satisfactorily one of the most pressing needs of all Dante students.

The previously accepted text of the *Convivio* was likewise most unreliable, though the researches of Dr Moore introduced valuable corrections in the third edition of the Oxford Dante. No fewer than thirty-nine MSS. are known, but the number counts for little, if the new editors—Parodi and Pellegrini—are right in their discovery that they all proceeded ultimately from a single copy (no longer extant) with mistakes and omissions and traces of the Aretine dialect. The task before the editors has again been one of special difficulty, and the general result—even if not a few readings or emendations may be open to considerable question—has certainly placed the study of the *Convivio* upon a firmer basis. We will cite just one instance, as it is among the readings discussed by Dr Moore in his *Textual Criticism of the 'Convivio'*.¹ In *Conv.* III, ii, Dante is discussing the tendency of the soul to unite herself in love with what appears to be a revelation of the Deity. The Oxford Dante reads: 'E perocchè nelle bontadi della natura la ragione si mostra divina.' For this Moore would substitute the reading of the Milanese editors: 'E perocchè nelle bontadi della natura [umana] la ragione si mostra della divina,' and understand 'the important truth that the standards of moral excellence for man must correspond with those which we believe to exist in the Divine Nature.' Parodi and Pellegrini now read: 'E però che ne le bontadi de la natura e de la ragione si mostra la divina.' The divine goodness, which is the ultimate object and cause of love, is revealed in the excellences of nature and of reason alike. It is analogous with the 'quanto per mente e per loco si gira' of *Par.* x, 4, and the gain of spiritual significance to the whole passage is surely unmistakable.

The two chief Latin works stood in less need of revision. Pio Rajna published his admirable critical edition of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* in 1896. It is unnecessary to remind the reader of the sensation caused in 1917 by the publication at Frankfort by Ludwig Bertalot of an edition based upon a hitherto unknown MS. (only three MSS., one of no importance, had previously been known to exist). The mystery with which Dr Bertalot saw fit to invest this MS. is not yet fully dispelled, but its readings—reflected in its discoverer's edition—have confirmed the emendations already introduced by Rajna and suggested others, so that the text here presented to us—mainly a revision of his former edition—may confidently be accepted as definitive and final. The current text of the *Monarchia*—from Witte to the Oxford Dante—has

¹ *Dante Studies*, series rv, pp. 66–67.

been a comparatively sound one. In the new critical text, ably edited by Rostagno, we will mention two minor points. The title is now established as *Monarchia*, instead of *De Monarchia*, the latter being contrary to the tradition of the MSS. and the concordant testimony of Dante's early biographers. It is now generally realised that, in the famous passage upon free will in I, xii ('Hoc viso, iterum manifestum esse potest quod hec libertas sive principium hoc totius libertatis nostre, est maximum donum humane nature a Deo collatum'), all the MSS. contain the incidental sentence: 'sicut in Paradiso Comedie iam dixi'. Rostagno shows that, though the MSS. in this case are comparatively few (about twelve), the position is analogous to that of the *Convivio*; they all ultimately proceed from a single and unauthoritative copy, in which the reference to the *Paradiso* is to be regarded as the interpolation of the scribe. We cannot feel quite satisfied with this summary rejection of the incidental sentence. Is it not perilously like the old habit of regarding a sonnet as spurious because it appeared 'un-Dantesque'?

With respect to the *Epistole*, English scholars can point with legitimate pride to the researches of Dr Toynbee which bore fruit in his admirable edition published in 1920 by the Clarendon Press². Apart from the Letter to Can Grande, the question of the MSS. is a simple one, and the task of the editor is reconstruction and emendation. The present editor, Pistelli, gives us the Letters in a form in external features more nearly approaching the Latin that Dante actually wrote, but in other respects his work for the most part confirms Dr Toynbee's results. This is especially noticeable in the Letter to the Italian Cardinals, where the English scholar's reconstruction was particularly searching. In the most familiar of the letters, *Amico Fiorentino* (which exists, it will be remembered, only in the Boccaccian MS.), there are two notable points where the two editions differ. Where Dante speaks of the source from which he has learned the dishonouring conditions under which he may return to Florence, Toynbee retains the generally accepted reading which is that of the MS.: 'per litteras vestri meique nepotis.' Now the letter is addressed to a religious, and Barbi, after a very exhaustive investigation as to all the poet's relations and connexions, could find no such personage who had a nephew in common with Dante. He therefore proposed an emendation: 'per litteras vestras meique nepotis'; which Pistelli adopts³. Strong though Barbi's arguments are, they seem hardly conclusive enough to necessitate the correction of a MS. which has come down to us in Boccaccio's hand. In the famous sentence at the end of the letter, the difference depends upon whether a contraction 'flor.' should be expanded as 'Florentino' or 'Florentineque.' Pistelli retains the previously accepted 'Florentineque': 'Nonne dulcissimas veritates potero speculari ubique sub celo, ni prius inglorium ymo ignominiosum populo Florentineque civitati me reddam?' Toynbee, correcting to 'Florentino,' reads: 'Nonne dulcissimas veritates potero speculari ubique sub coelo,

¹ Cf. C. Foligno, *The Date of the 'De Monarchia,'* in the Dante commemoration volume (University of London Press).

² Cf. *M.L.R.*, xvi, p. 183.

³ See *Studi danteschi*, II, pp. 115 et seq.

ni prius inglorium, immo ignominiosum, populo Florentino, civitati me reddam?' Apart from the more plausible expansion, the latter is more in accordance with the personal and familiar tone of the letter, with which the official formula, 'populus Florentinaque civitas,' seems out of harmony.

The Letter to Can Grande stands on a different footing. All the extant MSS. have been fully and directly utilised for the first time by Pistelli, who has likewise edited the *Egloghe* and the *Questio de Aqua et Terra*. The text of the Eclogues is fundamentally that previously established by Albini; the *Questio* must now be regarded as definitely admitted to the authentic canon of Dante's works.

We know Boccaccio's story—strikingly confirmed by a sonnet of Giovanni Quirino—of Dante sending the *Divina Commedia* by instalments to Can Grande della Scala at Verona. The formal publication appears to be represented by the fact that, in April or May, 1322, some eight months after the death of the poet, his son Jacopo presented a complete copy to Guido da Polenta, who was then captain of the People at Bologna. It was probably from Bologna that the poem, 'el Dante,' came to Florence, which henceforth took the lead in multiplying copies. There is the pleasing legend that a worthy citizen made a hundred such copies, by the sale of which he procured dowries for his daughters. The earliest extant Florentine MS., signed by Francesco di Ser Nardo of Barberino in Val di Pesa and dated 1337, is in the Biblioteca Trivulziana at Milan; another, signed by the same scribe and dated 1347, is in the Laurenziana. A year earlier than the first of these, indeed the earliest known MS. of the *Divina Commedia*, is the Codice Landiano at Piacenza, which is dated 1336, and was written for the then podestà of Genoa, Beccaria de' Beccaria, by one Antonio da Fermo, a native of the Marches who tinged the text with his local dialect. A little later Boccaccio made several copies of the sacred poem, of which the one now in the Chapter Library at Toledo (including the writer's own *Vita di Dante*, the *Vita Nuova*, and the *Canzoni*) has acquired considerable celebrity with students. It has been estimated that, out of between 500 and 600 MSS. that are extant, more than one half are of Florentine or at least Tuscan origin¹. But all this apparent wealth of MSS. does not represent a secure tradition. There are no MSS. which can be supposed derived directly from exemplars proceeding from Dante's immediate circle; the primitive tradition has been irretrievably lost; the corruption of the text had begun before any of the extant MSS. were written, and even the earliest commentators were acquainted with alternative readings. It is noteworthy that the Codice Landiano and the Trivulziano already differ on some of the points upon which textual criticism is still divided. The present editor, Vandelli, has found it

¹ See S. Morpurgo, *Il 'Dante' a Firenze*, in *Il Marzocco* (May 1, 1921). The Codice Trivulziano and the Codice Landiano have both been published in facsimile: *Il Codice Trivulziano 1080 della D.C.* with an introduction by Luigi Rocca (Milan, Hoepli, 1921); *Il Codice Landiano* with a preface by A. Balsamo and an introduction by G. Bertoni (Florence, Olschki, 1921).

impossible to construct a complete genealogy of the extant MSS. Consequently the selection between rival readings, the retention of those regarded as established or the substitution of others, has been part of a general and complicated task of critical reconstruction. Barbi aptly reminds us that, even if the new text does not differ substantially from the 'testo vulgato,' very many of the passages that appear unaltered have cost not less labour than those in which changes will be found¹. As this edition will inevitably supersede the Oxford Dante as a standard of reference, it is a pleasant duty to say that a comparison of the two texts of the *Divina Commedia* leaves the reader with an enhanced appreciation of the scholarship of Moore, for in many cases the readings adopted by him may now be regarded as confirmed by Vandelli's researches, and his *Textual Criticism* (though published so many years ago) can still be studied with profit. The new text cannot be regarded as final or definitive, but it is at least a great step forward, and, from the philological aspect, with its retention of forms characteristic of the Trecento, it marks a considerable advance upon all previous editions.

We will only select a few of the passages where the 'testo critico' differs from the Oxford or from that generally accepted. In the words of Beatrice on the permanence of Virgil's fame (*Inf.* II, 60), the Oxford Dante reads: 'e durerà quanto il *moto* lontana'; where *moto* would be synonymous for 'time,' time being the enumeration of movement (cf. *Conv.* IV, II, *Par.* XXVII, 115-120). Vandelli reverts to the more usual and perhaps easier reading *mondo*; but *moto* has the authority of the Codice Trivulziano and the Landiano alike. In the line about baptism (*Inf.* IV, 36), Moore followed the majority of the MSS. and the first four editions with 'ch'è *parte* de la fede che tu credi'; Vandelli prefers the more theologically accurate *porta* (which, indeed, the sense of the passage seems to require). We feel doubtful about the adoption of *Clugnè* for *Cologna* in *Inf.* XXIII, 63: 'che in *Clugnè* per li monaci fassi.' In *Purg.* VI, 111, the line of bitter sarcasm, 'e vedrai Santafior com'è *sicura*,' becomes almost meaningless by Vandelli's acceptance of the colourless *oscura*. Here the Codice Trivulziano reads *oscura*, the Landiano *secura*. On the other hand, the full philosophical sense of the passage on the impossibility of a creature hating God, in *Purg.* XVII, 111, is brought out by Vandelli's substitution of *effetto* (the reading of the Codice Trivulziano and three of the first four editions) for *affetto* (that of the Codice Landiano, the Oxford, and most modern texts): 'Da quello odiare ogni *effetto* è deciso.'

Probably the most severely criticised of the new readings is one in which again Vandelli has the Codice Trivulziano and three of the first four editions on his side. We refer to the famous passage (*Purg.* XX, 64-69), where Hugh Capet denounces the crimes of the royal house of France, beginning with the annexation of Provence:

Lì cominciò con forza e con menzogna
la sua rapina; e poscia, per ammenda,
Ponti e Normandia prese e Guascogna.

¹ *Prefazione*, pp. xxi-xxvii.

Carlo venne in Italia e, *per ammenda*,
vittima fè di Curradino ; e poi
ripinse al ciel Tommaso, *per ammenda*.

Commentators have naturally emphasised the dramatic force of this thrice repeated ironical *per ammenda*; but, in the second case, the new edition substitutes *per vicenda*:

Carlo venne in Italia e, *per vicenda*,
vittima fè di Curradino ; e poi
ripinse al ciel Tommaso, *per ammenda*.

The change seems to us not to lessen, but to modify the import of the poet's sarcasm, as also the articulation of the passage. The crimes laid to the charge of the Capetingi would thus fall into two pairs: a French and an Italian. As the scene changes from France to Italy, the fashion of the crime alters from rapine to murder. Charles came to Italy, and, 'for a change,' murdered Conradin, and then, for amends, St Thomas Aquinas. However, it requires more courage than we possess to defend Vandelli's innovation; we would only suggest that it is capable of more defence than its critics have perhaps recognised.

To take a few examples from the *Paradiso*. The best loved line in the poem is perhaps in Piccarda's speech to Dante (*Par.* III, 85). Here the Oxford text reads: 'E la sua volontate è nostra pace'; which is the reading of the Codice Trivulziano. The alternative, 'in la sua volontate è nostra pace,' is that of the Codice Landiano. Vandelli gives: 'E'n la sua volontade è nostra pace.' The retention of the *in* would perhaps be supported if we supposed the line a reminiscence of the sentence of St Augustine (*Conf.* XIII, 9): 'In bona voluntate pax nobis est.' But the meaning is far from identical; Augustine is thinking of the 'bona voluntas' of which the angels sang to the shepherds in the Vulgate version of St Luke. In the picture of the mystical espousals of St Francis and Lady Poverty, we have the famous image of Poverty united with her first Bridegroom upon the Cross (*Par.* XI, 70-72):

Nè valse esser costante nè feroce,
sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,
ella con Cristo *pianse* in su la croce.

Here Vandelli has returned to the reading more generally accepted (at least before the revival of Franciscan studies). The Oxford Dante followed Benvenuto da Imola in reading *salse*: 'ella con Cristo *salse* in su la croce.' Both the Codice Landiano and the Trivulziano read *pianse*, which is the normal reading of the MSS. and editions. The chief source for Dante's representation of the espousals with Lady Poverty was the *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae* of Ubertino da Casale, and certain words in the prayer to obtain the grace of Poverty, which Ubertino puts into the mouth of St Francis himself (v, i), might be cited to support either reading: 'Immo ipsa matre propter altitudinem crucis, que tamen te sola tunc fideliter coluit et affectu anxio tuis passionibus iuncta fuit, ipsa inquam tali matre te non valente contingere, domina Paupertas cum omnibus suis penuriis tamquam tibi gratissimus domicellus te plus quam unquam fuit strictius amplexata et tuo cruciatu precordialis

iuncta.' If this is doubtful, we think that most students will agree with Vandelli, in spite of Benvenuto and other early commentators, in the line about *il templo*, the Church (*Par.* xviii, 123): 'che si murò di *segni* e di martiri.' Here the testimony of the MSS. is overwhelmingly against the tempting variant accepted by Moore: 'che si murò di *sangue* e di martiri.'

Our last example shall be one in which the generally accepted reading has hitherto been unquestioned. It is the prophetic passage at the end of *Par.* xxvii (144), where Beatrice foretells the coming renovation of the Church or society in general:

Ruggiran sì questi cerchi superni,
che la fortuna che tanto s'aspetta
le poppe volgerà u' son le prore,
sì che la classe correrà diretta;
e vero frutto verrà dopo 'l fiore.

Here we take *fortuna* (as in *Purg.* xxxii, 116 and frequently in early Italian poetry) to mean, not 'fortune,' but 'tempest.' Vandelli emends the universally accepted *ruggiran*, 'shall roar,' to *raggeran*, 'shall ray,' a colourless substitution for Dante's powerful image of the roaring of the spheres to usher in the new age. But here we may confidently appeal to Dante's source to defend the established reading, for the image is surely suggested by Jeremiah (xxv, 30, 32): 'Dominus de excelso *rugiet*, et de habitaculo sancto suo dabit vocem suam...et turbo magnus egredietur a summitatibus terrae.'

It has been a wise decision of the Editors to exclude the *Fiore*—the famous rendering of the *Roman de la Rose* in 232 sonnets which not a few scholars would accept as Dante's—from the sexcentenary volume, and to issue the critical text separately as an 'appendice dantiana.' It has been admirably done by Parodi, who has united with it the less known and inferior *Detto d'Amore*, which he regards as the work of the same hand. The preface contains what seems to us the strongest case yet put forward against the attribution to Dante of the *Fiore*, and the little book—in external form a humble companion to the Dante volume—will be most welcome to every student of early Italian poetry.

EDMUND G. GARDNER.

MANCHESTER.

Althochdeutsches Lesebuch. Von WILHELM BRAUNE. Achte Auflage. Halle: M. Niemeyer. 1921. viii + 278 pp.

Though it is close upon fifty years since the appearance of its first edition, Braune's *Lesebuch* still belongs to the indispensable outfit of every serious student of Old High German, and as it has been out of print for a considerable time, the new edition is sure to meet with a grateful welcome from all who are interested in the subject.

With the help of the material which has accumulated since the publication of the seventh edition in 1911, the book has been carefully